

Through science-based instruction in sensory science you'll be provided with a complete, internationally recognized language for quality.

Seafood quality, or lack thereof, is the most important factor that drives consumers' decision to purchase, or not to purchase, seafood. Seafood quality is determined mainly through sensory evaluation by both consumers and quality assurance personnel.

Flavor perception by humans consists of many factors. It is critical to link specific, well defined product attributes to quality traits valued and perceived by the consumer.

The sensory science community and international sensory standards organizations have recognized that the judgment of a trained panel, or highly trained individuals, known as product experts, is a reliable, practical, effective, and objective method to measure food quality. This measurement can be correlated with other objective quality measures by physical, instrumental, or chemical means, and with consumer quality perceptions.

## Qualifications

The USDC Seafood Inspection Program has a cadre of highly trained, internationally certified seafood product experts. These individuals:

- have years of hands-on product and process experience
- have been scientifically trained in

sensory science

- are versed in internationally recognized seafood quality language
- have been proven to be accurate and consistent
- are internationally calibrated by other government agencies based upon agreed certification guidelines and certified by the USDC

## Services

Our sensory experts are available to assist you with a full spectrum of objective, scientific sensory quality evaluation services:

- Sensory training for your personnel through
  - scheduled workshops in our facilities
  - on-site visits to your facility with your product
- Objective quality comparison of your product versus others on the market.
- Product quality evaluation in our labs or your facility to:
  - identify product quality range
  - detect decomposition
  - detect contamination and taint (fuel oil, feed odors, muddy/earthy off odors)
  - identify of storage and packaging effects.

## Benefits

A wide range of benefits include the following:

- Sensory consultations from internationally certified, statistically proven, legally defined product experts.
- Detailed reports with quality information using recognized seafood quality descriptors.
- Assurance that you get the quality level you order.
- Confidence that your product is free from off flavors due to contamination or taint.
- Assurance that your firm will not experience regulatory action due to product decomposition problems.
- Improved product evaluation through a better understanding of the science and communication of sensory problems associated with seafood.
- Hands-on experience and practical skill development.
- Better understanding of the descriptive language of sensory science and seafood quality.
- Low student - instructor ratio
- Continuing Education Units (CEUs) upon completion of the workshop from Mississippi State University



## Our Personnel

### Terriann Reilly

Chief of the National Sensory Science Section, Terriann has over 10 years of experience in the sensory evaluation of fishery products. Her international involvement includes representing the USDC in Free Trade sensory activities, as well as collaborating with the American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM), the International Organization for Standardization, the Institute of Food Technologists Seafood Products Executive Committee, the Sensory Technology group at Arthur D. Little, the University of California, Davis, the USDA and North Carolina State University. Terri holds a Masters Degree in Food Science from the University of Rhode Island.

### Michael DiLiberti

Michael DiLiberti has over twenty five years experience in the seafood industry. Mike holds a Master's Degree in Education from Georgia State University and is an adjunct professor of Food Science and Technology at Mississippi State University. Mike has additional education in sensory methods from the University of Manitoba and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in Canada.

... and our other internationally recognized sensory experts.

The USDC Seafood Inspection Program participates with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in workshops that utilize statistically-based protocols to identify and maintain sensory experts to various fisheries commodities.

For more information contact:

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Visit Our Web Site:  
[seafood.nmfs.gov](http://seafood.nmfs.gov)

# SENSORY EVALUATION

**Learn the sensory  
language of quality!**



**U.S. Department of Commerce  
Seafood Inspection Program**